

**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS
Winner School District
Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process Report 2006-2007**

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Date of Report: March 28, 2007

This report contains the results of the steering committee's self-assessment and the validation of the self-assessment by Special Education Programs. The report addresses six principles – General Supervision, Free Appropriate Public Education, Appropriate Evaluation, Procedural Safeguards, Individualized Education Program and Least Restrictive Environment. Each principle is rated based on the following scale:

Promising Practice The district/agency exceeds this requirement through the implementation of innovative, high-quality programming and instructional practices.

Meets Requirements The district/agency consistently meets this requirement.

Needs Improvement The district/agency has met this requirement but has identified areas of weakness that left unaddressed may result in non-compliance.

Out of Compliance The district/agency consistently does not meet this requirement.

Not applicable In a small number of cases, the standard may not be applicable for your district/agency. If an item is not applicable, the steering committee should briefly explain why the item is NA. Example – no private schools within the district boundaries.

Principle 1 – General Supervision

General supervision means the school district's administrative responsibilities to ensure federal and state regulations are implemented and a free appropriate public education is provided for each eligible child with a disability. The specific areas addressed in principle one are child find, referral procedures, children voluntarily enrolled by parents in private schools, students placed by the school district, improving results through performance goals and indicators (assessment, drop out, graduation), professional development, suspension and expulsion rates.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Surveys from parents and school staff
- Flow through funds request and budget information
- Carter Christian School information
- Comprehensive plan

- Workshops and trainings
- District information – table #1
- District staff information – table #2
- Suspension and expulsion date – table #3
- Assessment information – table #4
- Enrollment information – table #5
- Placement alternatives – table #6
- Disabling conditions – table #7
- Exiting date – table #7
- Child count information
- District report card
- Referrals
- File reviews
- Child find activities
- Infinite campus information (SIMS)
- IEP information
- District forms
- School handbooks
- Board policies

Promising practice

The steering committee concluded the Winner School District has procedures in place that identify students with disabilities. Various student data including formal and informal assessments (SAT 10, Dakota STEP, DRA, DIBLES, STAR Math and Reading and reading inventories) are used in the referral process to review the student's ability and academic performance. Each building uses a team approach to all referrals and evaluations. The district has developed more inclusive forms to assist in the referral process.

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded the district has procedures in place that are used for the child find process. The district works with all the agencies in the community to provide child find services. Within the school system the district currently has a TAT in place but is currently looking into implementing a different pre-referral process through special education and the general education staff at each building. When a teacher requests assistance from the special education team, they will complete a pre-referral form that contains evaluation information and modifications that have been implemented to assist a student prior to referral to special education.

The district implements the AREA (Advanced Reading Enhancement Approach) reading curriculum at the elementary level and teachers are training in DIBLES. The district also uses Infinite Campus which is available to all educators in the district as well as parents. The parents are able to keep track of student performance using the parental portal through Infinite Campus. Infinite Campus has been upgraded and now all evaluation information completed at the state level is available to educators for review.

The steering committee concluded the Winner School District meets the requirements serving students with disabilities enrolled in the private school in the

district. The Winner School District provides special education services to eligible students in private schools.

The steering committee concluded that the Winner School District meets state and federal guidelines for placing students in out of district placements. In all cases the IEP was developed with the student's multidisciplinary team in attendance including a representative of the Winner School District.

The Winner School District steering committee concluded that each building special education and regular education team reviews the discipline data on an individual basis and revises plans to accommodate those students who are having trouble in school and suspensions are eminent. Administration also works closely with this team and helps with the revision of plans. Team meetings are held when students are suspended to assist the student with continued progress in the curricular areas.

The Winner School District steering committee reviewed the qualifications of staff employed and/or contracted by the district. All staff are fully certified.

Needs improvement

The steering committee concluded the district needs to establish a better documentation method for tracking new referrals, screenings, 3-year evaluations and if students qualified for special education after evaluation. The Special Education Director along with the School Psychologist are working on developing such a documentation system.

Validation Results

Promising practice

Through staff interview and file review the monitoring team cannot validate the steering committee findings as promising practices under the provision general supervision. Districts are required to review previous interventions and determine the effectiveness of those interventions as part of the pre-referral and referral process.

Meets requirements

Through file review and staff interview the monitoring team validates the steering committee findings as meeting requirement under the provision general supervision. The district has child find activities in place for preschool and school age children. The district uses a variety of interventions prior to referring a student for evaluation to determine if the student has a disability. The district meets requirements when serving students with disabilities in private school and out-of-district placements. The district employs highly qualified staff as per state and federal requirement. The district is developing a system to track student referrals, screenings and initial evaluation and reevaluations in order to better monitor the referral process.

Out of compliance: Needs Intervention

ARSD 24:05:17:03 Annual report of children served

The monitoring team determined there was no IEP in the student file for two students (files 24 and 25) listed on the 2005 child count. File 24 (disability category 525) did not have an IEP in the file for 1-29-2005 annual IEP date and file

25 (disability category 525) did not have an IEP in the file for the 9-28-2005 annual IEP date.

Principle 2 – Free Appropriate Public Education

All eligible children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The specific areas addressed in principle two are the provision of FAPE to children residing in group homes, foster homes, or institutions, making FAPE available when a child reaches his/her 3rd birthday and providing FAPE to eligible children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 cumulative days.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Surveys from parents and school staff
- Budget information
- Comprehensive plan
- Workshops and trainings
- District information – table #1
- District staff information – table #2
- Suspension and expulsion data – table 3
- Assessment information – table 4
- Enrollment information – table 5
- Placement alternatives – table 6
- Disabling conditions – table 7
- Exiting data – table 8
- Early intervention data
- Complaint information
- Monitoring information
- Child count information
- Referrals
- Files reviewed
- Infinite Campus Information (SIMS)
- IEP information
- District forms
- Employee Handbook
- Board Policies

Promising Practice

The steering committee reported the building administrators are aware of the procedures when considering removal of a student with a disability. Case facilitators are made aware of any removals of students through email and Infinite Campus on a regular basis. Documentation of removals is completed by building administrators on an ongoing annual basis. The removal documents are forwarded to the special education office for Special Education Programs (SEP) reporting.

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded the Winner School District has many programs in place to ensure a FAPE for all students including: Love and Logic, DARE, Character Counts, Family Service Specialist, Before and After School Tutoring, Summer School program and referrals to agencies in the community when necessary.

The steering committee concluded the Winner School District provides a free appropriate public education to all eligible children with disabilities across the public, private and residential settings. The district uses a continuum of alternative placements to provide an individualized educational program for students with disabilities.

The steering committee concluded that the Winner School District is in compliance with suspensions and expulsions of students with disabilities.

Needs Improvement:

The steering committee concluded the Winner School District could benefit from more opportunities for students who are in out-of-school suspension.

Validation Results

Promising practice

Through staff interview the monitoring team cannot validate the steering committee findings under free appropriate public education as a promising practice. The responsibility to monitor and report the removal of students with a disability from their placement due to behaviors is required in order to ensure free appropriate public education is provided.

Through staff interview and observations the monitoring team determined the number of program opportunities available to all students within the district as a promising practice. The district's preschool program is a contracted service with a private agency. The district hires highly qualified staff to provide services to those students with disabilities attending the preschool program and is free of charge to them. The preschool allows for a natural inclusive environment which benefits all students. Parent involvement is seen as a promising practice at the elementary school. Parents are invited to visit their child's school at anytime; however, once a month the school has a "parent day", which is a special day for parents to visit school. All grades in the Elementary School have a "Family Meal Day" and a "Family Fun Night". The "Family Fun Night" focuses on academic and social activities. Parent Resource Center provides parent workshops. In addition the monitoring team noted the district implements various programs as promising practices in the district. The district implements the Boost Up program for elementary students beginning at Kindergarden. Middle school teachers have a shared forty-two minute period in which they, along with the special education teacher, can confer with each other about student concerns and plan accordingly. The high school has a wide variety of levels of core subjects which allow for students with disabilities the opportunity to participate in the general curriculum along with students without a disability. The high school offers a Credit Recovery Program for students who may have failed an English or Math class or students who have dropped out of school. This program is held for twenty days during the summer and is open to students in Winner and the surrounding area as well as

young people involved with the Department of Corrections. Courses are taught by certified teachers. Students are taking advantage of this opportunity as there were 25-30 students who attended last summer. The district also hires a full time job coach to work students who participate in Project Skills. A Family Service Specialist is an outreach school counselor at the elementary and middle school level. This person does home visits and helps with communication between the parents and the schools.

Meets requirements

Through staff interview the monitoring team validates the steering committee findings as meeting requirement under free appropriate public education (FAPE). Staff follow the district behavior matrix/policy at all levels. Programs such as DARE, Character Counts, and Love and Logic are provided to help develop healthy life choices. The district also provides a multitude of opportunities for staff development in and out of district.

The monitoring team could not validate the steering committee findings under FAPE as needing improvement. The district does provide many opportunities for students as mentioned above.

Principle 3 – Appropriate Evaluation

A comprehensive evaluation is conducted by a team of knowledgeable staff, which also includes parental input. A valid and reliable evaluation will result in effective individualized education programs for eligible students. The specific areas addressed in principle three are written notice and consent for evaluation, evaluation procedures and instruments, eligibility determination, reevaluation and continuing eligibility.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Teacher file reviews
- Student files
- Surveys
- General curriculum information
- Special education log
- Infinite Campus information
- Budget information
- Home school student information
- Comprehensive plan
- Workshops and training
- Personnel summary – table 2
- Disabling conditions – table 7
- Exiting data – table 8
- Data by age and placement alternative
- Data by disabling condition and placement alternative
- Early intervention (Part C) exit information
- Monitoring information

- Referrals
- IEP information
- District evaluations
- Out of district evaluation agencies

Promising Practice:

The steering committee concluded that parents are actively involved in the evaluation process in identifying students with disabilities and give consent. Parental input is obtained into the evaluation process. Parents are asked to complete a questionnaire regarding their child. Most of the questionnaires are returned promptly. The case facilitators work with parents to meet at their convenience to keep them informed and involved in their child's educational needs.

The steering committee reported that the district receives referrals throughout the school year. Parents report that the teachers have assisted their child through various instructional strategies before special education was considered. Evaluation areas are reviewed with team members including the parents. Evaluations are conducted in a timely manner. Since January 2005 evaluation reports of students that have had an initial evaluation or reevaluation have contained functional assessment information. Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) eligibility reports contain all required information and include all team members. Parent surveys stated they understand evaluation information and receive copies of the reports. Parents also report that the evaluation information has been used in developing their child's IEP.

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded the Winner School District provides appropriate written notice and obtains consent prior to the administration of assessments. Consent is gained for both new evaluations and reevaluations in almost every case.

Functional assessment information is obtained from both the general education and special education staff during the referral process. New forms have been developed and adopted by the special education team to aid in gathering more academic information to adequately choose evaluation areas, determining eligibility and writing IEPs. The district gathers past evaluation information in addition to guided reading information, Reading Recovery information, and classroom performance across all disciplines.

Transition surveys and assessments often are given at age 14 for students to aid in course selection at the high school level. Evaluations are current in the district and administered by qualified personnel. Case facilitators provide evaluation reports to parents prior to the initial eligibility placement committee meeting. Currently there are no students that require Braille text however the district employs a Brailist.

The steering committee concluded the district is using reevaluations and assessments appropriately and meets the requirements of Independent Education Evaluations.

The steering committee concluded the students in the Winner School District have reevaluations every three years to determine eligibility. It is the practice of the

district to reevaluate all students prior to dismissing them from special education and/or related services. Dismissal forms are signed by parents and IEP team prior to dismissal.

Needs improvement

The steering committee concluded the Winner School District could improve in reviewing the past evaluations and use them to assist in determining if a reevaluation is necessary. Since the last CIMP review the district has improved on the use of functional assessments but needs to continue to complete them on all students during the evaluation process.

The steering committee concluded that the district could improve on obtaining medical records to document medical conditions that affect a student's learning. The district has improved, however; information is still lacking for some cases of ADHD.

The steering committee concluded that reevaluations are completed every three years and before dismissing from special education or a related service.

Validation Results

Promising practice

Through file review and staff interview the monitoring cannot validate the steering committee findings under appropriate evaluation as promising practice. Parental input into the evaluation process and consent prior to evaluation is required, as is ongoing child find activities. Transition evaluation is required by age 16 or earlier if so determined by the IEP team. Reevaluation for a student with a disability is required to determine if the student continues to be eligible for special education or special education and related services every three years. Functional assessment is a part of this reevaluation process.

Meets requirements

The monitoring team can validate some of the steering committee findings as meeting requirements under appropriate evaluation. The district has started evaluating in the area of transition and the district uses qualified personnel during the evaluation process.

The monitoring team cannot validate the following steering committee findings as meeting requirement: functional assessment, consent for evaluation, and meeting reevaluation timelines.

Out of compliance: Needs Assistance

The monitoring team determined the district does not consistently use a team approach when determining what areas need to be evaluated according to the student's suspected disability. As a result evaluation/reevaluations do not consistently meet evaluation/reevaluation regulations.

CFR 300.304 Evaluation Procedures (a)Notice The public agency must provide notice to the parents of a child with a disability, in accordance with 300.503, that describes any evaluation procedures the agency proposes to conduct.

CRF 300.301 initial evaluation (a) General. Each public agency must conduct a full and individual initial evaluation, in accordance with 300.305 and 300.306 before the initial provisions of special education and related services to a child with a disability under this part.

Through file review the monitoring team determined even though the district has prior notice/content for evaluation in each student file, the district conducted additional evaluations in areas not listed on the prior notice/consent for evaluation. Areas such as adaptive behaviors, transition, visual motor, speech or language were evaluated but were not listed on the prior notice/consent for evaluation in eleven files reviewed. The Bender Gestalt Visual Motor evaluation was consistently administered along with the ability test even though there was no visual motor concern identified during the referral process and was not documented on the prior notice/permission to evaluate. The district also did not administer all evaluations for which parental consent was obtained. For example the parent gave permission for Ability, Achievement, Speech and Language evaluations but only speech and language were given. In another file the parent gave consent for ability, achievement, speech and language but the student was not evaluated in the area of speech.

CFR 300.304 Evaluation Procedures the public agency must (1) use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about the child, including information provided by the parents that may assist in determining whether the is a child with a disability and the content of the child's IEP.

Through review of student files the monitoring determined the district does not consistently gather relevant functional, developmental and academic information that may be used to develop the content of the IEP and assist in determining whether the student is a child with a disability. Although there is a short functional portion written in the psychological report it is not functionally relevant or useful in the development of the IEP because it is not skill specific to the disability. In eight files there was no evidence of functional assessment occurring as part of the evaluation process as there was no written summary. This then affected the eligibility determination process and the development of the IEP. In one file, although the student's evaluation scores indicated the student was eligible for special education under the disability category 550, the team said the student's "articulation errors do not affect the student's ability to be successful".

ARSD 24:05:25:06 Reevaluations

Each school district shall conduct a reevaluation of each child with a disability in accordance with this chapter if the district determines that the educational or related service needs, including improved academic achievement and functional performance of the child, warrant a reevaluation, or if the child's parents or teacher requests a reevaluation. A reevaluation conducted for these purposes may not occur more frequently than once a year, unless the parent and district agree, but shall occur at least once every three years, unless the parent and the district agree that a reevaluation is unnecessary.

Through file review the monitoring team determined the district did not consistently complete the reevaluation process within the 3 year timeline.

ARSD 24:05:24.01:09. Developmental delay defined. A student three, four, or five years old may be identified as a student with a disability if the student has one of the major disabilities listed in § 24:05:24.01:01 or if the student experiences a severe delay in development.

The disability category of developmental delay can be used only for those students under 6 years old and must be reevaluated prior to age 6 to determine if the student has a disability under the other 13 disability categories in order to receive services through special education. Through file review and interview, the monitoring team determined the district does not consistently reevaluate students identified under the disability category 570 prior to the student turning 6 years old.

Out of compliance: Needs Intervention

Issues requiring immediate attention

CFR 300.304 Evaluation Procedures (4)The child is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability, including, if appropriate, health, vision, hearing, social, and emotional status and motor abilities; (6) in evaluating each child with a disability under 300.304 through 300.306, the evaluation is sufficiently comprehensive to identify all the child's special education and related service needs, whether or not commonly linked to the disability category in which the child has been classified.

CFR 300.305 Additional requirements for evaluations and reevaluations

(a)Review of existing evaluation data. As part of any reevaluation under this part, the IEP team and other qualified professionals, as appropriate must (1) review existing evaluation data (2) on the basis of that review, and input from the parents, identify what additional data, if any, are needed to determine whether the child is a child with a disability and the educational needs of the child.

In student file 22 the monitoring team determined the district needs to convene to consider all evaluation results for the eligibility determination process. The district has in file an 11/20/06 report stating the student "may continue to be eligible under 560" but the student is on child count as 530 (510 and 550). Because there was no documentation as to what evaluation results were used in the determination process and because there was no prior notice, the monitoring team was unclear as to what evaluation results were used in determining eligibility. Following all procedural safeguard procedures and appropriate evaluation procedures, the team now needs to convene to consider existing data, input from the parents, identify what additional data, if any, are needed to determine whether the child is a child with a disability and then complete and document the eligibility determination process to ensure correct identification.

In student file 16 the student had an active IEP in place at the time of the onsite review and was receiving services. After the 12/2006 reevaluations were completed the district met only to determine continued eligibility for special education on 12/20/06. Federal guidelines require the IEP team to review existing reevaluation

results to determine continued eligibility and to determine whether any additions or modifications to the special education and related services are needed for the child to meet the measurable goals set out in the IEP. As of 2/20/07, the district had not yet met to accept the current IEP even though new evaluation information was available or to develop a new IEP in light of the current evaluation results. At a minimum, the district needs to hold an addendum meeting stating the team approved the present IEP and that the reevaluation did not result in any additions or modifications of the current IEP. The district must realize that the annual IEP date will then be the date of the current IEP and not the date of the addendum in order to ensure annual review of this student's next IEP.

In student file 7 the student was identified under the disability category 560 on the 2005 and 2006 child count. During the November-December 2006 reevaluation process there is no evidence in the file that the team considered existing evaluation data (the 2004 autism evaluation) as it was not noted on the prior notice/consent for evaluation or prior notice for eligibility meeting. The district got permission to evaluate only in the areas of ability and achievement but then evaluated in the areas of adaptive behaviors and language also. This student was then determined to be eligible under the disability category of 525 at the 12-06-06 eligibility meeting. This eligibility meeting was held without the reports in hand as they were received by the district on 2-20-07. The district needs to convene and consider all areas of suspected disability, consider current evaluation data, and consider if they need additional evaluations to appropriately identify the student's disability. During this process the district needs to ensure and document parental involvement/input and document exactly what data was used and what data was not used and why it was not used as part of the eligibility process. In doing this the district needs to follow all procedural safeguard procedures and appropriate evaluation process.

For file 26 the district will need to convene and determine what disability this student is eligible for. The 2006 MDT report says the student is eligible as 510. This determination was done without an adaptive behavior evaluation. Then without conducting any further evaluation in January 2007 an addendum says the student is eligible as 525. Also, during the 2006 evaluation the team did not evaluate behavior evaluations even though the student had a documented history of hyperactive aggressive behaviors and other concerns. The district will again need to consider all areas of suspected disability, review existing data, determine if they need any additional data and evaluate accordingly. In doing this the district needs to follow all procedural safeguard procedures and appropriate evaluation process. This student is not on either the 2005 or 2006 child count.

Principle 4 – Procedural Safeguards

Parents of children with disabilities have certain rights available. The school makes parents aware of these rights and makes sure they are understood. The specific areas addressed in principle four are adult student/transfer of rights, content of rights, consent, written notice, confidentiality and access to records, independent educational evaluation (IEE), complaint procedures, and due process hearings.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Teacher file reviews
- Surveys
- Comprehensive plan
- Parental rights booklet
- Consent and prior notice forms
- FERPA disclosure
- Personnel training
- Budget information
- IEPs
- Employee handbook
- Board policies

Promising practice

The steering committee concluded the district ensures procedural safeguards are followed. Rights booklets are given at every IEP meeting. Parent rights brochures only have to be given to parents at the first initial meeting of each year. No due process hearings have been held in the last five years. Parents have requested the use of an advocate for their child through South Dakota Advocacy Services.

Meets requirements

The steering committee concludes that the Winner School District meets the requirements of providing parental rights information to parents. The district is utilizing the new parent rights brochure the entire 2006-2007 school year. The steering committee concluded that the Winner School District meets the requirements of parental rights to inspect and review educational records.

The steering committee concludes the district meets the requirements of responding to complaint actions.

Validation Results

Promising practice

Through file review the monitoring team cannot validate the steering committee findings as a promising practice. Parental rights need to be shared with parents and parents have the right to inspect records.

Meets requirements

The monitoring team agrees with the steering committee findings under procedural safeguards as meeting requirements.

Principle 5 – Individualized Education Program

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written document for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised by the IEP team, which includes the parent. The specific areas addressed in principle five are IEP team, IEP content, transition components for secondary IEPs, annual reviews, transition from early intervention program, and IEP related issues.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- Monitoring
- Teacher file reviews
- Surveys
- Comprehensive plan
- IEP information
- Personnel training
- Budget information
- Employee handbook
- Curriculum information
- Board policies

Promising practice

The steering committee concluded the district exceeds the requirements under Individualized Education Program in several areas. The district uses a variety of creative practices to maintain a least restrictive environment. Elementary students participate in daily Accelerated Reading and Math which is a computer program based on individual ability. Winner Elementary students also participate in Boost Up activities with their peers and individually. Paraprofessionals and special education teachers are used in the general classroom as often as possible. Before and after school tutors are available at all buildings across the district to work with all students.

The high school has created several lists regarding transition information which is used in inviting agencies to IEP meetings. High school students most often attend their IEP meetings. The middle school and high school teachers have begun completing transition surveys in various classes and are used for information as part of the student's IEP input. Infinite Campus provides current grades and course information and is used by the case facilitators to enable the inviting of all necessary parties. The high school teachers use forms to distribute prior to IEP meetings to obtain current progress reports in all enrolled classes. The high school teachers have begun completing transition surveys (ESTR-J) in various classes and are used to gather information as part of the student's IEP input. The high school teachers include a current schedule which is available through Infinite Campus to update actual courses of study. Student transcripts are available through Infinite Campus and are included in the high school IEP transition information so progress toward graduation requirements is reviewed annually. The district also developed a transfer of rights document that students sign to document the transfer of rights and is kept as part of the IEP document when reviewed.

General education teachers that are responsible for monitoring goals and objectives are given copies of the students' IEPs. Middle school staff has team preparation times weekly so general education teachers have contact with a special education teachers who know the students with disabilities more thoroughly.

The steering committee concluded the district exceeds requirements under Individualized Education Programs in the area of management. Special education

logs are generated by the special education office and sent to the buildings annually that lists the students by annual review date. The IEP form has been revised in certain areas to assist with completing all the necessary components. The IEP form is reviewed annually for improvements. The special education teachers have had laptops for the past eight years for assistance in completing special education paperwork on computer documents. Most often the word template is used, however: the steering committee noted that the Infinite Campus IEP is also being looked into on a regular basis. All the templates contain added information so that all components are included within special education paperwork. The IEP form is reviewed annually for improvements. Department meetings provide opportunities for continued training on components of the IEP. Several memos have been distributed when IEPs are audited at random to note areas of weakness.

Meets requirements

The district steering committee concluded the district meets requirements under the provision Individualized Education Program. The district's prior notice form contains all of the necessary information. IEP teams are complete at all levels and provide input to the development of IEP goals and objectives. The district staff survey reflects that the special education staff is available for ongoing communication regarding students with disabilities.

The steering committee concluded transition is being addressed through the IEP process. High school teachers include a current schedule which is available through Infinite Campus to update actual courses of study. Student transcripts are available through Infinite Campus and are included in the high school IEP transition information so progress toward graduation requirements is reviewed annually. Annual surveys are completed and included as student input into the IEP. High school students almost always attend their IEP meeting and provide input throughout the meeting. High school special education teachers have attended transition workshops. Several transition assessments and surveys have been gathered to use for varying levels of student abilities. Over the last year we have begun to utilize the ESTR-J for students being transitioned. The high school implemented special education classes such as Employability, Transition, and Work Experience which focus on transition to adulthood. There are also several general education classes such as Employability, Woodcarving, FACS and other electives that provide hands on experiences.

The steering committee reported the district has been involved in curriculum mapping at all grade levels, developing improvement plans for NCLB accountability and updating curriculum to meet individual needs. The district also offers several opportunities in the educational setting such as tutoring, DIBELS, guided reading, and reading first curriculum. Infinite Campus provides a detailed view of specific standards that are weak. The district also adopts new curriculum on a rotating basis.

The steering committee concluded that the Winner School District has policies and procedures in place for ensuring an eligible student is on an IEP and receiving services.

Needs improvement

The district steering committee concluded the district does not consistently meet requirements in the following areas: transition, timelines, present level of academic achievement and functional performance, and addressing behavioral supports. The student should be invited to all IEP meetings at the middle and high school level. Student files need to include transition services appropriate to individual student needs for a student reaching 16 years of age. The district has greatly improved on inviting outside agencies and needs to continue to do so for upperclassmen. The district steering committee concluded that timelines are usually followed but dates need to be adhered to when providing evaluations, eligibility and initial placement meetings and annual review meetings.

The steering committee concluded that while the form contains all the necessary information, improvements can be made in the present levels of performance to make sure all areas are addressed, including the necessary behavioral supports for students with behavior issues.

The steering committee concluded that 100% of student files need an IEP that is reviewed annually.

Validation Results

Promising practice

Through observations and interviews the monitoring team validates many of the steering committee findings as promising practices as the district provides many educational opportunities. This is addressed under principle two, free appropriate public education.

Other findings determined by the steering committee as promising practices cannot be validated as they are required components. This includes high school students attending their own IEP, inviting outside agencies to IEPs, using current state approved IEP forms, and reviewing /revising student IEP on an annual basis.

Meets requirements

Through file review the monitoring team can validate some of the steering committee findings as meeting requirement under IEP. Prior notices for IEP meetings are in the student files. The district has shown considerable improvement over the past year in the area of transition evaluation for high school students by the time they are age 16. The district does provide services for those students who have been determined to be eligible for special education.

Out of compliance: Needs Assistance

Through file review the monitoring team determined the district does not consistently adhere to all requirements under principle 5, Individualized Education Program (IEP). This includes addressing behavior strategies through the IEP process, linking goals to functional evaluation, transition services and activities for students 16 years and older and

ARSD 24:05:27:01.02 Development, review and revision of the IEP- Consideration of Special Factors

In developing, reviewing, and revising each student's IEP, the team shall consider the strengths of the students and the concerns of the parents for enhancing the

education of their student, the results of the initial or most recent evaluation of the students as appropriate, and the results of the student's performance on any general state or district-wide assessment program. The individualized education program team also shall: (1) In the case of a student whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others, consider, if appropriate, strategies, including positive behavioral interventions, strategies, and supports, to address that behavior.

In two student files reviewed, present level of academic achievement and functional performance contained information regarding the student's behavior. However, in developing the IEPs for these students, the team checked "no," that the behavior does not impede learning and did not address strategies, including positive behavioral interventions and supports, to address the behaviors.

ARSD 24:05:27:01.03 Content of individualized education program (IEP) Present level of academic achievement and functional performance

A student's IEP must contain present level of academic achievement and functional performance based upon the skill areas affected by the student's identified disability. The present level of academic achievement and functional performance are based upon the functional (skill based) assessment information gathered during the comprehensive evaluation process.

The monitoring team determined student files lacked the required content (i.e. specific skill area(s) affected by the student's disability, to include strengths and needs. File reviews indicated a need to improve functional assessments to acquire the skill-based information to develop present levels of academic achievement and functional performance for students eligible for special education services.

ARSD 24:05:27:01.03(1) Content of individualized education program (IEP) and

ARSD 24:05:27:13.02 Transition Services

Transition services are a coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability, designed within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the student with a disability to facilitate the student's movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation. The coordinated set of activities shall be based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's strengths, preferences and interests, and shall include instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

The district has made improvement in transition, especially in the area of evaluation. But, transition services and activities need to be documented as a part of planning to help ensure the student achieves his/her desired outcomes for employment and independent living. The district did not consistently document

what services the student needed, who was responsible for implementing the services, projected date of completion, and date of completion.

Through file review the monitoring team also determined the district documentation of the student's course of study does not align with the student's post-secondary goals. The district generalizes the course of study by simply documenting the student will take "electives" but does not document specifically what electives the student needs to align with his/her goals.

Principle 6 – Least Restrictive Environment

After the IEP is developed or reviewed, the IEP team must decide where the IEP services are to be provided. Consideration begins in the general education classroom for school age students. The specific areas addressed in principle six are placement decisions, consent for initial placement, least restrictive environment procedures, preschool children, and LRE related issues.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

- File reviews
- Surveys
- General curriculum information
- Budget information
- Workshops and training
- Child count

Meets requirements

The steering committee concluded the Winner School District meets the requirements of least restrictive environment. The inclusion of students in the general education setting is supported with collaboration between special education and general education teachers. All kindergartens in Winner are full day. Class sizes are closely monitored in the primary grades so the teachers are allowed more individual student attention. In 2005-2006 the Elementary School began a Beginnergarten program. We have also moved a special education teacher from the middle school to the elementary to specifically work with these younger IEP students. This particular teacher does have an early childhood special education degree as well so we feel that this situation is ideal for our younger IEP students.

The special education departments in each building also have a publication that contains hundreds of ideas for students with difficulties in specific areas including academic and behavior.

The district steering committee understands the time commitment for adapting curriculum for students with disabilities especially with the impacts of NCLB, new curriculum adoptions, state initiatives and district initiatives/goals that are also require much of their time. The middle school uses planning times each day to meet as a team and a special education teacher is part of the general education team.

Validation Results

Meets requirements

Through file review, observations and interviews the monitoring team validates the steering committee findings under principle six as meeting requirements.